Visit of US Defence Secretary

1747. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a)whether it is a fact that US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrived suddenly in India on 8th February 2004;

(b)if so, what was the agenda of his visit; and

(c)the outcome of his visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Indo-Pak Composite Dialogue

†1748. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a)whether during Indo-Pak Secretary level talks on composite dialogue held on 27-28 December, 2004 in Delhi had discussed the progress made and reviews carried out so far;

(b)if so, the details thereof; and

(c)the programme formulated to continue this talk?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Foreign Secretary Level talks between India and Pakistan were held on December 27-28, 2004 in Islamabad. The following decisions were taken, *inter alia,* during the meeting:

Building upon the existing contacts between DGMOs, it was agreed to promote regular contacts at local level at designated places and to explore further CBMs along the international boundary and the LoC.

The differences on the draft agreement on pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missilies were discussed, narrowed further and it was agreed to work towards its early finalization.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

On issues related to apprehended fishermen, civilian prisoners and .missing defence personnel, it was *inter-alia* agreed that:

(i) Immediate notification would be provided to the respective High Commissions through the Foreign Ministries of arrested Pakistani/Indian nationals;

(ii) Consular access would be provided within three months of apprehension;

(iii) Repatriation would be done immediately after completion of sentence and nationality verification;

(iv) A mechanism would be introduced for early repatriation, without sentencing of inadvertent crossers;

(v) A similar mechanism would be established for early release, without sentencing of those under 16 apprehended by either side.

India announced Visa on arrival at Wagah Border for Pakistani nationals above 65 years, children below 16 years, and pre-vetted groups; and grant of Student Visas to Pakistani nationals on a case-by-case basis.

The Foreign Secretary Level talks initiated the second round of the Composite Dialogue. The following programme was chalked out to continue the talks further:

It was decided that technical meetings including the Joint Study Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation headed by the Commerce Secretaries, Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, Pakistan Rangers and Border Secrurity Force of India, Expert level dialogue on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs, technical level meeting on bus service between/through Amritsar and Lahore, meeting between the Narcotics Control Authorities would be held between January and June 2005.

It was agreed that the meeting on the other six subjects under the Composite Dialogue, *i.e.* Siachen, Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project, Sir Creek, Terrorism & Drug Trafficking, Economic & Commercial Cooperation and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields would be held on mutually agreed dates between April and June 2005.